

FINAL

**Town of Middlebury
Energy Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 19, 2018**

Present: Ross Conrad, Chris Robbins, Lindsay Fuentes-George, Howard Widelitz, John Snyder-White.
Guest: Richard Hopkins.

Ross convened the meeting at 8:50 am. (Note: all votes are unanimous unless otherwise indicated.)

Minutes: Meeting Minutes from November were approved with the correction of one typo. Motion by Howard, seconded by Chris.

Town Meeting Report: Lindsay offered to go through the minutes from the past year and write up a brief summary for the town report.

Energy Upgrades/Town Energy Use: Van had combined information about propane use for the police station with heating degree days. He said there are two peaks, one in the coldest and one in the hottest times of the year. In response to a question about the use of energy committee funds, Chris showed an email that went to the infrastructure committee detailing the money to be used from the police budget and from the energy committee budget for next year for the proposed upgrades. The town is planning to have Judy Harris handle the RFPs and contracts for the work. Howard said he would talk to Kathleen about possibly having energy committee members help with that, since it is quite costly.

Chris had found some charts of energy use in town buildings from previous years. 2010-2011 electricity usage showed that the Palmer Springs well pump used by far the most, followed by the police station. An undated chart of BTU/sq ft for heating showed highest use by the old town office and the public works garage. The treatment plant and the teen center were next highest. Richard brought some charts of residential and commercial/industrial energy usage for the 8 towns that are part of the Greater Middlebury Climate Economy project. Most usage was quite flat for the last 5 years, but Middlebury's showed a slight increase and then a decline. Howard said that documents like these ought to be included on our web site.

Ross reported that there are REAP grants available for energy audits. Chris moved and Lindsay seconded a motion to have Ross look into writing a proposal for the public works building for select board approval in January, provide that Dan Werner agrees.

Chris and Lindsay discussed upcoming equipment purchases. One or two police cruisers are purchased every year, and Lindsay said that hybrids exist but are new and untested. Chief Hanley is aware of this and keeping an eye on the possibilities. The town keeps track of the fuel used by each vehicle and piece of equipment, so it is possible to estimate savings with more efficient models.

John Snyder-White entered at 9:30.

Town Renewable Energy Policy Update: Richard said he attended the select board meeting where the policy was amended so that it does not apply to repairs or fuel switching. He said Laura Asermily was the only dissenter. A discussion followed about the advantages and disadvantages of wood energy vs renewable natural gas. Ross and Richard recommended reading the regional planning commission's energy plan. Now that this plan is in place, the ACRPC can approve towns' enhanced energy plans.

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Button Up/Midd Night Stroll debriefing : Chris said that at the two Midd Night Stroll nights, we got many pages of sign-ups for Efficiency VT. This was mainly due to the efforts of Ross and Paul Markowitz from Efficiency VT enticing passers-by to take the free light bulbs, weather stripping, and gift certificates for weatherization supplies from Goodro and Martin's. Chris is storing the poster boards, Mary Mack dresses and poles to hang them on at her house, and Ross is storing the literature and remaining give-aways from Midd Night Stroll. Chris said the only thing the town paid for was the poster boards.

GMP policies: Richard said he had gotten Green Mountain Power to change its policies regarding electric water heaters. They have one policy that lets you get a variable rate depending on usage, and another that lets GMP shut off the appliance temporarily during periods of high demand. They had told him customers cannot combine those two programs, but now they are allowing it. He plans to write a letter to the paper letting people know these policies are available.

Membership: Chris and Steve have terms expiring in April. Ross thinks Steve is interested in continuing, but Chris intends to get off the committee since she has been on it for several years. Richard is interested in joining, and Diane may come back. We are allowed up to 9 members. John suggested putting a notice on Front Porch Forum. Chris said a link to the infrastructure committee has been very useful, and it would be good to have someone who knows about vehicles and equipment if we plan to help identify efficient alternatives. In addition, since Hannah left, there has not been anyone focused on reaching out to young people. Chris said she would put the notice on FPF. John said he would take over maintaining the Facebook page that Hannah started.

Planning for Next Year: Ross suggested we think about this for the next meeting. Do we want to write an enhanced energy plan? And would it need to support natural gas? Lindsay said we should seek out more revenue sources.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 on a motion by Lindsay, seconded by John. Next meeting will be January 16 at 8:45 am.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Robbins